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Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 MOGADI 00771 101254Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
----------069394 101314Z /53
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FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6134

S E C R E T MOGADISCIO 0771

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, MASS, SO, US
SUBJ: THE ATTEMPTED COUP--SOME PRELIMINARY THOUGHTS ON ITS RAMIFICATIONS FOR US - SOMALI TIES

1. I STILL DO NOT HAVE A VERY CLEAR IDEA OF WHAT THE RAMIFICATIONS OF THE APRIL 9 COUP ATTEMPT MAY BE. THE DIMENSIONS ARE VAGUE. I BELIEVE IT WAS AN INTERNAL MILITARY AFFAIR, AND REASONABLY MINOR AS THOSE THINGS GO, BUT I AM CONCERNED BY THE ABSENCE OF MORE AUTHORITATIVE REPORTING FROM THE REST OF THE COUNTRY. THERE ARE QUITE CANDIDLY MORE QUESTIONS IN MY MIND RIGHT NOW THAN THERE ARE ANSWERS. DOES THE ATTEMPTED COUP FORETELL A MAJOR PURGE OF THE MILITARY AND PARTY APPARATUS? WHAT WILL BE THE EFFECT ON THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT'S WRIT OUTSIDE OF MOGADISCIO? WILL THE EVENTS TEND TO EXPAND OR LIMIT SIAD'S PERSONAL POWER? HOW WILL THE ATTEMPT COLOR HIS PERCEPTIONS OF THE GSDR'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNITED STATES?

2. UNTIL I AM BETTER ABLE ADDRESS THESE QUESTIONS I AM RELUCTANT TO COMMENT ON THE FULL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ATTEMPTED COUP ON US SOMALI RELATIONS. THERE ARE ALREADY REPORTS CURRENT IN MOGADISCIO THAT THE PLOTTERS WOULD NOT HAVE STRUCK HAD SIAD BEEN ABLE TO DEMONSTRATE A ACTIVE SUPPORT FROM THE UNITED STATES. I DISMISS THESE REPORTS AS SELF SERVING, ALTHOUGH THE ARGUMENT IS PLAUSIBLE. I CANNOT EXCAPE THE CONCLUSION THAT THE ATTEMPT WILL DELAY A RESPONSE TO
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THE GSDR ON WEAPONS SUPPLY. INDEED, I RELUCTANTLY CONCLUDE IT MUST. I DO BELIEVE, HOWEVER, WE OUGHT TO BE PREPARED TO MOE AS SOON AS THE MATTER COMES INTO PERSPECTIVE, AND I THINK THAT FOCUS MAY NOT REQUIRE TOO MUCH TIME TO ACHIEVE, PERHAPS A FEW DAYS. A DECISION TO COME TO SIAD'S SUPPORT WITH MILITARY HARDWARE INEVITABLY ENTAILS SOME RISK. IT WILL NEVER BE A DECISION FREE OF CONSEQUENCES. IF WE ARE SEEN TO ACT IN THE NEAR FUTURE IT WILL

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REDOUND TO OUR CREDIT. IF WE DELAY INORDINATELY, BASING THAT ON THE
ATTEMPTED COUP OR OTHER CONSIDERATIONS, THE UNITED STATES WILL
BE PERCEIVED AS EVEN MORE RELUCTANT TO PLAY A MEANINGFUL ROLE IN
THE HORN THAN SIAD NOW SEES IT TO BE.
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